Welcome to the inaugural issue of benefits FOCUS, our new benefits update series that will run bi-weekly for the next few months, then quarterly thereafter. Leave issues, medical and dental plan...whatever the subject, we hope you will find benefits FOCUS a quick and important source of timely information about your Albemarle County Benefits. There’s a lot going on in the benefits world..............

What’s the BIG news?

Open Enrollment is moving to JUNE. Open Enrollment will now be held during the month of June, rather than July. This change will better serve our school system employees who will be heading out on summer break, and give us the time we need to ensure accurate processing of all Open Enrollment data. Look for the reminder on the envelope of your April paystub!

We’re also making a few other changes to the Open Enrollment Process, including MANDATORY participation for ALL benefits-eligible employees. WHY?

- New employer mandates under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) make it necessary for us to document that we’ve offered health insurance coverage as specified in the Act
- Increased costs to the health plan in conjunction with the ACA will necessitate that ALL employees who participate in the health plan verify the eligibility of their dependents for the coverage
• This will help us maintain accurate employee data – you’ll verify your address, your tax withholding status, your plan elections (whether you’re making changes or not) and whether you and your spouse both work for the County

What’s happening soon?

The advent of a new VRS retirement plan (the “Hybrid” plan) in January leaves us with a dilemma that must be addressed – what do we do about our current leave policies when one group of employees has state-mandated leave benefits and administration that are different, and potentially better, than what other employees have? **Want your voice heard on the subject? Participate in a focus group!** We’ve got several sessions for you to choose from:

• April 15th – Monticello High School Forum, 4-5pm
• April 17th – Albemarle High School, lower cafeteria, 4-5 pm
• April 23rd – Western Albemarle High School, cafeteria, 4-5 pm
• May 14th – COB McIntire, Room 235, 12-1pm
• May 21st – COB 5th Street, Room B, 12-1pm

Please click (*HERE*) to register for your preferred session.

For more information about your employee benefits, our web pages are always available when you are at:  
[http://www.albemarle.org/department.asp?department=hr&re]